

Report of visit to Congo by Executive Secretary
July 7 - August 8, 1964

"That all People, Nations, and Languages,
Should Serve Him" Dan. 7:14b

The prophet Daniel lay on his bed and had a vision. Among other significant insights he said -

I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7:13,14.

Before July 1, 1960, the epidemic of Nationalism and independence that was infecting large parts of Africa struck Congo. We are familiar with the then sudden turn of events. Congolese did not believe the "Daniels" of that day but rather listened to the "magicians, astrologers, and chaldeans". The "Daniels" were attacked, some killed, and others evacuated. Gospel messengers fled for their lives. About 200 Bantu tribes had now arrived within the gate of Independence. It was to be a glorious entrance with bliss in certain consequence, so they unknowingly thought.

In earthquake suddenness there was quivering and shaking over all of Congo. Congo was fragmentized from six provinces into 21 with some boundary lines still in dispute. Tribal feuds formerly subdued triggered into fighting, burning of villages, evacuations, bloodshed, and temporary famine for refugees. Political aspirants sought supporting constituencies which rapidly divided the people into rival groups. Promises were colossal only to deepen the mire of disillusionment. The Adoula government, soon unable to satisfy the desires of the masses and simultaneously subdue rabid reactionaries, found itself plagued

with Eastern inspired rebels who resorted to violence to make their cause known. The Kwilu and Albertville areas serve as examples. Additional misery sprung from the undisciplined, at times savage, efforts of the National army.

Then the ironic happened. A coalition of once rival leaders was formed to hopefully bring order out of chaos. A contest to the finish among them would have brought certain disastrous results. What this "oil and water" mixture can and will do is yet to be seen. We need to pray that God might overrule and the gospel have free course.

During the above noted period of Congolese frustration and turbulence, missionaries slowly returned to Congo. They were generally desired but in a new role. Paternalism was history. Partnership was questionable. Servanthood was acceptable and desirable. Now there is a noticeable willingness on mission stations to give missionaries a free hand. This is more limited in public circles.

There appears to be a general weariness of the kind of independence obtained. The public has come to despise the promising politicians who appear often to feather their nests before distributing pay envelopes that have been short changed or delayed. It will take a long time until spiritual and moral persuasion is generally effected. Public servants will need to be sifted and resifted and it will require time to establish confidence and stability, if ever. Now it appears that such who have positions of any power exploit to the very limit.

Scope of Visit

Into the above context I scheduled a visit to the C.I.M. field. This was to include events as the Missionary Retreat at Tshikapa, the annual Conference at Mutema, visit to the stations, Bakwanga, Lulua-bourg, where we are engaged in literature and radio work, Stanleyville.

where the Protestant University is, Kimpese, and Leopoldville, where we are involved in Leco and hold two hostels for missionary children, and meetings with the Field Committee, and various missionaries. There was also a stop at Brussels to contact the Brussels Bureau with Dr. Oscar Stenstrom in charge and a brief visit with the Fremont Regiers, Tina Warkentin, and Betty Rempel. God gave us moments of challenge and inspiration in many ways.

I will proceed to briefly review these experiences according to events and places.

The Missionary Retreat at Tshikapa

This is an annual affair when missionaries gather at a designated place for fellowship and spiritual refreshment. I had opportunity to share in four Bible studies and dialogue in general. There was spirited group singing and special numbers. I was moved by the observation that all the songs chosen had a note of triumph. We opened with "Saviour, Like A Shepherd Lead Us". The missionaries knew the meaning of this song from recent experiences. This time of fellowship was most enriching.

The Mutena Conference

After 11 hours of bouncing, dusty travel, covering about 130 miles and crossing one ferry which took 3½ hours we arrived at Mutena in the V. J. Sprunger Scout to attend the annual conference. Air travel from Tshikapa via MAF is 14 minutes with a clean white shirt on arrival.

Mukedi, Kandala, and Bakwanga delegates were absent. Nyanga delegates arrived one day late because of a breakdown. Actual delegate count was 62.

The conference proceeded with Ngongo David of Nyanga presiding at all sessions. There were plenary sessions and time to meet for the various Commissions. It was my privilege to give four addresses during the worship sessions. Discussions were vigorous with considerable time consuming irrelevant matter. Educational problems seemed to dominate the discussion.

Exception to this was the consideration given to the new constitution which was finally provisionally accepted. Lack of knowledge about the constitution appeared to stimulate some apprehensions about it.

There were no motions. When discussion ended on a given subject it was considered settled.

I got the impression that the church is somewhat intimidated by the educational group. The church is organically responsible for the education program and there appear to be signs of reversing this influence. We will need a strengthening of the church--leaders who can teach, preach, do personal work and advance the church to a stronger position. Leaders appear to see this and are appealing for missionary help along this line.

Some of the appeals of the Commission on Education were:

1. A secondary teacher for Banga.
2. Additional classrooms for Charlesville.
3. Official uniform grade cards.
4. A central library from which to get books.
5. A uniform curriculum to conform to state regulations.
6. That the Evangelistic committee work out a course of religion for the first four grades in Primary school.
7. That teachers be given special classes to better understand the national curriculum.
8. That teachers get free medicine.

9. A Secondary school for Kamayala.
10. Budget money for travel.
11. A Secondary school for girls.
12. Somebody institute corrective measures for some dishonest school directors.
13. Registered displeasure at contemplated move of secondary normal school to Kikwit.

The Medical Commission asked for a doctor at Nyanga and nurse for Banga and Kalonda; said dispensaries qualify but get no subsidy--infirmiers want subsidy; requested a medical school class and asked, "Are there any more doctors in America?"

The Evangelistic Commission requested nails, cement, and roofing to repair buildings, and want the mission to supply transport for materials. They asked, "How can theological students get help?" It was decided each church should provide for their own. "What do you do with an overseer who doesn't do his duty?" Reply, "Kick him out of his job."

The Administrative Report revealed some of the inner feelings of Congolese. Placing blame is an art with them. Missionaries were blamed for not helping and giving enough. The Home Board is not doing what it could. "We could help but we just don't want to."

The economic struggle is noticeably real. An adequate concept of business and business procedure is wanting. The transition from handouts to economic self-responsibility seems difficult and slow. Initiative and motivation need development according to the American pace. They took the position that the mission could help more but they do not want to. They expressed a desperation for schools of all sorts.

Missionaries felt that the conference showed considerable improvement over others since 1960. Organization was improving and there was a growing moderation in the use of "blame". (I thought there was much of this yet.)

Conclusion: Every Board member ought to have a chance to attend an annual African Conference.

The Stations

Tshikapa-Kalonda: Here is the field headquarters. It is the center of activity with the largest concentration of missionaries. Here is the large 16 building-300 bed hospital, a bookstore and literature distributing center, the agriculture program, a secondary school, and beginning in the fall of 1964, the re-opening of Institute Biblique at Kalonda.

Nyanga: Here is our chief educational center with plans for a complete secondary school. Progress is being made in the development of a lending library and a science laboratory. About two additional buildings will be needed for school purposes and some additional housing. There is a convenient airstrip. It is hoped to have a doctor permanently located here with adequate working facilities.

Kamayala: This is the place of the leper colony with 52 occupants, the orphan home with a turnover of about 50, and an Evangelistic Center. From here there were 14 regional centers--7 of which were burned by the Jeunnesse. It was at this point about 14 miles out where the Jeunnesse attacked and the local citizenry of Batschoke people resisted, furiously killing all but six or eight of a band of 384. That seemed to end the Jeunnesse threat for the present in that area. Kamayala wants a secondary school and will need medical personnel. Here the presence of evangelist Ben Eide is significantly evident.

Banga: Here the church appears weak. A missionary is desired, initiative seems low and a missionary could do much to spark action. The dispensary operates with a Congolese in charge as well as the primary school.

Charlesville: Perhaps the most disappointing in deterioration of the physical assets. We will need to remind ourselves that this station has been completely evacuated since 1960 and the people now in occupancy have no appreciation of the struggle and achievements of this place in the past. Much is needed here in every way from repair of buildings to the rebuilding of a program. There is a church with a pastor. Here is a wide open door for much work and a great need for stabilization of population.

Bakwanga: On the surface and perhaps deeper, here was a spiritual enthusiasm unexcelled by any other station. The Sunday morning service was unique. A real fire was started before the audience and fed during a one hour and 45 minute service to illustrate the unity and working of the Holy Spirit in the church. Four speakers including one lady spoke under the skilled moderator Pastor Kazadi Mathew. It was a most refreshing experience.

In the afternoon we met with the A.M.C. leaders of the area at which time they presented a letter with four requests.

1. Scholarships for student study outside of Congo.
2. Sixty thousand francs aid for their school.
3. A vehicle.
4. Secondary teachers. They said, "One hundred whites there risking lives for diamonds--aren't souls worth more." They would also like an agriculture man.

Mixed into the spiritual enthusiasm was an underlying feeling of uncertainty and uneasiness as to the future.

C.F.R.A. is slowly terminating in this area by turning various work projects to the Congolese. Archie Graber felt it would be good if a missionary couple could be sent here to carry on in various ways after they leave.

Kandala and Mukedi: Still no communication.

The Programs

The Church. Bringing into being, developing, purifying and inspiring the church is the most difficult of our assignments. Partly because often the results are so abstract to be unobservable and because of the pernicious moral and spiritual failures that require attention and often have long lasting unsavory results.

Yet the church is the organ responsible for all other mission involvements. Her strength or weakness directly or indirectly affects the total program.

Congolese of all beliefs and levels of moral living readily accept medical aid, food, or even education. Here progress is also gratifying. Bodies are healed and knowledge is noticeably increased. But building the body of the redeemed against the forces of evil takes the power of God and people deeply committed to an uphill, discouraging, often unappreciated service.

In Congo the church is responsible for the primary and secondary school program. The government provides subsidy for teachers, supplies, and buildings as it has funds but the responsibility of establishing, directing, and teaching the school is in the church and much of this actually falls back to the mission and the Legal Representative who is basically responsible for the computation of salaries and distribution of the same.

This makes the church more than a spiritual and moral body seeking to develop qualitatively and quantitatively. It mires the church into affairs that tend to secularize her very existence--not by intent but by diversion. The school system then having the better trained leadership tends to frown on church authority intimidating vigorous discipline and propagation.

I feel the necessary urgent remedy to this problem is a more dynamic church offensive by sending in more path evangelists to evangelize, make disciples, and train and inspire local pastors. The plague of low motivation will need some counter-measures. Then we will need to raise the standard of training for theological students to be comparable to secular training. Otherwise I envision a trained household of Mennonites getting their start from a church that is slowly watered down and made lifeless by its own offspring. We need some more missionary spiritual leaders of strong evangelistic courage and fervor who will face this problem in a person to person encounter.

Education. The primary schools are all in African hands and the quality of work done is conceded, even by Africans, to be inferior. Many otherwise capable students fail entrance exams for the secondary schools.

We have already pointed out the need for more secondary schools, standardization of curriculum, and qualified teachers.

The education program has a long mile to make but even though full achievement is most distant this is perhaps the strongest aspect of the C.I.M. program. We will undoubtedly become more deeply involved in this area before Africans can carry the responsibility.

Medical. Doctors are slowly returning from European training centers who will be stationed at government posts and in cities. However there will be need for doctors and nurses for a long time to come.

Most of the doctors are trained in accelerated, short-cut training programs making them incapable for most surgical problems. We need additional doctors and nurses now. Training centers are badly needed with people who can train nationals. Dr. and Mrs. Zook have a deep desire to do more in a medical training program. This needs further study.

Agriculture. Women, for the most part, produce the food for the table. Agriculture as an occupation is rare in our area. Transportation and markets are a discouraging factor. People have food to eat, and a balanced diet will need to be learned. Manioc is the base and Africans can raise chickens if initiative is present. Goats and pigs are running around. Nyanga could get by with less razor back swine.

We look forward to the arrival of the Fremont Regiers who will be giving this a thorough study before we engage in any major expenditure or program.

Literature, translation, bookstores. Here we are actively and effectively involved. "Tuyaya Kunyi" is now selling about 12,000 - 14,000 copies monthly. Literature outlets are active with good results. Literature and books are being sold from 42 outlets at cost, some with a small profit, and some at subsidized prices.

The printing program at Leco is being enlarged with additional presses and more floor space. A branch office is maintained at Stanleyville. Henry Dirks has been an excellent addition in this area with his skill as a printer. Wilbert Neuenschwander is now in Europe learning French to assist in operating a Bookmobile to supply bookstores and retail directly.

Radio. The radio thrust will be a cooperative venture with A.P.C.M. and possibly others under the general direction of Charles Sprunger.

A production center is in process of development, consisting of a studio and recording room in the dwelling of the Charles Sprungers at Luluabourg. Equipment is on the way now. It will take another two or three months to get programs on the air. The Tshiluba speaking area that can be covered by this method has a potential of three to five million souls. Congolese are sensitively vulnerable to all sorts of propaganda. The emotion of fear is especially sensitive and devious methods are employed by rebel groups to demoralize the populace by this method. A lie appears to be believed in preference to truth.

Radio from church sponsorship could do much to present another side of life. The gospel can be given, hope stimulated, purpose in life explained and promoted, and outlets for spiritual counsel and correspondence Bible courses opened. Portable radios are seen carried about giving visible evidence of a wide open door.

As rapidly as possible we ought to do something for the Apende people and others along this same line.

Children's School at Leopoldville. Purchase of the Hostel gives C.I.M. an excellent location in close proximity to the American School. It secures our future in the area.

The block of eight houses offered by Chanic to the American School appears to be a good buy. The houses are in good repair and built of durable materials. We could hardly go wrong on them unless we were early suddenly forced to evacuate. Purchase at this point is still pending.

The location and management of the Hostels are a source of satisfaction to our missionary parents. From the standpoint of political turbulence, Leopoldville appears to be the least vulnerable.

Cooperative Ventures

Leco, Union Mission House, Institute Medicale Evangelique, COMAS, Liproka, Carproka, and the Protestant University have C.I.M. blood and/or funds in them.

In Leco we have funds and currently three couples. In U.M.H. we have funds only. In I.M.E. we have funds and a single lady. In COMAS we share 50-50 with M.C.C. in funds and one couple. To Liproka we furnish one couple with another on the way. To Carproka we give funds and currently one couple in management. To the Protestant University we have made a small contribution and furnish the Academic Dean, with other professors in prospect.

These involvements make possible services beyond the capacity of C.I.M. alone and to the benefit of more people at less cost. Each is controlled and operated by a local Board.

Impressions

At best, an impression is not to be considered a bonafide fact. So what I say here is intended only as impression and not to be construed as an absolute or even relatively correct evaluation. The human factor, knowledgeability, and experience on my part is freighted with inadequacy. However, having been mantled with the privilege and responsibility of this visit I will venture a little.

1. The image of Congo to the U.S. presented by the secular press, radio, and TV is uniquely colorful and geared to popular appeal with isolated incidents of eruption played up as reflecting the attitude and mood of all of Congo. I saw a different Congo than that of the news.

2. Congo is a sick country wearing a tattered and torn shirt, riding in an amateurly designed political vehicle, with a flat tire

economy, a broken steering wheel and shimmering front wheels to ride the road to recovery, openly vulnerable to internal exploitation, and external ideology.

3. Congo will need to choose very soon a course of direction to survive as a national entity.

4. The missions have a sobering responsibility in this crucial hour.

5. Under the present political circumstances, the life and activity of mission will require constant review.

6. Of a certainty, we can plan for long years of participation in an educational program, medical program and other service programs-- if the door remains open.

7. Hopefully and dynamically we are under command to plant and prepare the church all over the world in longing anticipation for the imminent return of our Saviour and Lord.

8. It would be tragedy for the missions to abandon this country now; rather we should reinforce our efforts with additional personnel in most of our going programs.

What did Daniel say?

"That all people, nations, and languages should serve Him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Will Congo have a remnant in that Kingdom because of us? Our current response makes a difference either way.

CONGO INLAND MISSION
EGLISE MENNONITE AU CONGO
B.P. 440
M B U J I M A Y I

le 2 Août 1964

DIAKIDILA DIA MUKELANGE SECRETAIRE MUNENE
WA BOODI KU AMERIQUE

Ne MUKELANGE SPRUNGER
REPRESENTANT LEGAL DE LA C.I.M.
TSHIKAPA

Mukelenge Secrétaire,

Moyo wenu .

Lelu wa ndaya, mitsgima yetu idi ne disanka didi kadiyi mua kuambibua bua difika diebe munkatshi muetu, dikale dijinga mua kumona benene bua mudimu utudi n'au.

Tudi tusakidila Nzambi Tatu wetu bonso bua difika dienu munkatshi muetu. Kadi tudi tutamba kusanka bua bantu badi batumona bu muenu, ne batusamba hatudi mu dikenga.

Tudi tunuvuluija tshihamue ne Mukelenge Représentant wetu bua malomba etu mu mikanda yituakanufundila. Ne tudi tutekemena diandamuna dienu dilengele ku malu aa:

1. Tudi tujinga muyishi bua Ecole Secondaire Unie
2. Tudi tujinga Tshidima, Mumunyi, udi mua kushala ku Kabeya Kamuanga .
3. Tudi tunulomba 602000 francs (Soixante milles francs) bu tshituha tshietu tshia kuela mu mushete wa Ecole Secondaire Unie.
4. Tudi tunulomba machine bua kuenza n'au masangisha
5. Bourse d'études

Ha mutu ha malu aa onso, tudi tunujingila mudimu mulenga munkatshi muetu. Ne tulombela kudi Nzambi Mufuki bua anuhesha bukole bua mubidi.

POUR LA CONFERENCE DE DISTRICT

LE SECRETAIRE

P.O. NTUMBA ANDRE B.

LE PRESIDENT

M.L. KAZADI



R. Short.

ITINERARY PROPOSED FOR SECRETARY SHORT

in Brussels

Wed. July 8	Arr. Leo 6 PM	
Th. July 9	Evenings meet with CIM personnel Days visit and consult on problems touching such interests as CPC, UMH, American School, etc.	
Fr. July 10		
Sat. July 11	AM Fly MAF Kajiji via Kikwit to pick up V.T. Sprunger. PM Fly MAF Kamayala. If possible to arrange with MAF, spend night at Kamayala	
Sun. July 12	AM Worship Kamayala PM Fly Tshikapa EVE Start missionary retreat	
Mon. July 13	Missionary Retreat	Mon AM MAF pilot to Mutena via car
Tues. July 14		Tue AM MAF pilot to Tshikapa " "
		Tue PM MAF fly to Mutena
Wed July 15	Delegate travel Mutena	MAF fly Kamayala delegates
Th July 16	<i>P.M. message</i>	MAF back to Leo
Fri. July 17	Mutena Conference <i>one message</i>	
Sat. July 18		
Sun. July 19		
Mon. July 20		Delegate travel home
Tues. July 21	Day with Art and Mission books	Mon. or Tues. MAF fly Kamayala delegates home
Wed. July 22	Day with exec. committee	
Th. July 23	Tshikapa area work	
Fri. July 24	Banga, possibly Charlesville	
Sat. July 25	Nyanga	
Sun. July 26	Nyanga	
Mon. July 27	To Tshikapa	<i>Review findings with State Secretary</i>
Tues. July 28	Tshikapa	
Wed. July 29	To Llb.	
Th. July 30	and week following: Bakwanga via APCM plane Luluabourg Stanleyville and Leo via Air Congo	

It is probable that visits will be made to Kimpese,
Kikwit and Vanga after his return to Leo.

*Then to Brussels to Bureau
missionaries staying here.*